

We Asked, You Said, We Did

Below are some of the issues we have recently consulted on and their outcomes.

Proposed 2026 Census data products feedback survey

We asked

In preparation for the 2026 Census, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has been reviewing the data products and outputs from the 2021 Census to ensure they meet the needs of the modern data user. In May 2025, the ABS released a paper '[Proposed 2026 Census data products](#)' which communicated the recommended suite of products, based off consultation held over the preceding 18 months.

To understand how these proposed products would meet data user needs, the ABS conducted a consultation exercise through the Consultation Hub, seeking feedback on the proposed changes. It was open for 3 weeks, to all members of the public, and respondents could be anonymous if they wished.

You said

Over the 3-week period, the ABS received survey submissions from 146 data users. Representation amongst the respondents covered individuals, members from all levels of government, academics, those working in community organisations as well as private enterprise. Feedback showed data users were mostly pleased by the proposed products and their enhancements, though many were concerned by the prospect of Community Profiles no longer being produced, and thus, data becoming less accessible for community groups.

Some key points from the feedback include:

Community Profiles

Community Profiles have been a reliable and consistent package of geography-specific data that users have valued being able to download and share. Data users valued its standard format, and it being an accurate source of information, no matter their level of statistical skills.

The Time Series Profile continues to be a critical product to those who rely on it, and some are concerned it won't be retained.

It was noted that Community Profiles is less useful to those seeking summary data, finding QuickStats more suitable, and when more complex tables were needed, Community Profiles often misses the mark by providing more cross-tabulations than necessary, resulting in data users creating custom tables in TableBuilder instead.

TableBuilder

TableBuilder has offered data users the option to control the data they need, by way of building custom tables, but many Community Profiles users are daunted by the tool's complexity. Some lack the confidence to accurately reproduce what is currently contained in the Community Profiles, and others point to its functionality being less user friendly, along with the expected impact on their time.

QuickStats

QuickStats is largely considered the go-to product for many, and feedback welcomed its suite of data being expanded to cover more of what Community Profiles offered.

The proposed enhancements which covered the Table expander, Topic filter navigation and the inclusion of visualisations were all well received, along with the sharing options, citation, embedding and download/print functionality.

Geospatial tool

The proposed new tool through which data users can access both DataPacks and GeoPackages, with the addition of an ArcGIS map interface, was widely regarded as a positive step forward, removing the barrier for data users currently without access to mapping software, and enabling browsing tables and maps before needing to extract data.

Some were keen to learn more about its API functionality, and general feedback showed great interest in understanding more as its development continues.

Some data users who rely on DataPacks were unsure of it being retained and noted their desire for it to remain mostly unchanged where possible.

We did

In response to the feedback, we are reviewing plans for the data, the products, and their supporting materials. Respondents to the survey could opt-in for future discussions about the proposed products, and the ABS is currently engaging with some respondents, to gain practical insights into their use of Community Profiles, as well as the other products. These conversations will inform an assessment of the impact these proposed changes may have and consequently, design considerations.

We remain committed to releasing quality data products and appreciate the time and effort users have contributed so far. The ABS plans to produce advice on final developments to the 2026 Census data products suite later this year, with the aim to spread awareness and ensure users have sufficient time to prepare for the exciting changes. The ABS is grateful for the participation of so many, and we look forward to sharing with you our progress towards 2026 Census data release.

Any questions?

Please email census.data@abs.gov.au with any questions on this consultation or for further information.

2025 Minor Review of the Australian Standard Classification of Cultural and Ethnic Groups (ASCCEG) - Consultation Round 1

We asked

The public consultation ran from 9 April 2025 to 16 May 2025. The ABS sought feedback on the scope of the review (below) and requested other issues also be identified.

2025 Minor Review of the Australian Standard Classification of Cultural and Ethnic Groups (ASCCEG) scope:

1. Investigation into the addition of new Cultural and Ethnic groups (4-digit level)
2. Appropriate representation of existing Cultural and Ethnic groups (labelling, spellings)
3. Investigation into retiring declining Cultural and Ethnic groups (4-digit level)

For more detailed information on the scope, please refer to *2025 ASCCEG Review - Scope v1.0*, document attached

at the end of this page, under the heading **Related**.

You said

This public consultation generated 43 submissions from a range of individuals and organisations.

The feedback we received was diverse and insightful. It highlighted the importance of Census data products and the need for continuous improvement to meet the evolving needs of users.

Most of the items in the scope were broadly supported for the review. The topics in the scope that attracted the most submissions were the identification of new 4-digit groups and the inaccurate representation of existing groups.

In addition to the issues outlined in the scope, a number of other concerns were raised, including:

- The need to revise ASCCEG more broadly, to investigate the current structure and appropriate placement of existing Cultural and Ethnic groups.
- Some submissions asked for clarification on the labelling and naming conventions used in the ASCCEG, along with clarification about why some groups were included at the 4-digit level while others are not.
- The need to provide further explanatory information regarding application of the classification criteria and the use of ASCCEG for measuring ancestry captured in the Census.

We did

The ABS reviewed all 43 Phase 1 submissions and has drafted changes to the ASCCEG. The proposed changes to the ASCCEG and supporting information will be presented via the ABS Consultation Hub on 4 August 2025. Stakeholders will be able to provide feedback on the proposed changes via this second phase of consultation before the final update is published in November 2025.

Any issues or feedback identified in this process, but not investigated, will be considered in a future review.

Future consultation

The second phase of public consultation on the proposed changes to the ASCCEG is expected to be conducted via the ABS Consultation Hub starting 4 August 2025.

Further information regarding Phase 1 is also available in the FAQ and Scope documents, at the end of this page, under the heading **Related**.

Any questions?

Please email standards@abs.gov.au with any questions on this consultation or for further information.

OSCA Maintenance Strategy Questionnaire

We asked

From 11 March to 4 April 2025, the ABS gathered stakeholder input on the ongoing maintenance strategy for the Occupation Standard Classification for Australia (OSCA), including components underpinning maintenance, timing of updates, and the framework for prioritising proposed changes. We consulted on the usefulness of the proposed model for maintenance and any barriers you anticipate for implementation of future classification updates.

OSCA is the new classification developed following the comprehensive review of the Australia and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO), which had not been reviewed in its entirety since the first edition in 2006 and was no longer reflective of the modern labour market. The main aim of the maintenance strategy for OSCA is to ensure the classification continues to reflect the evolution of the labour market.

You said

The ABS received 123 responses from all levels of government, businesses, Jobs and Skills Councils, industry bodies/associations, academics and individuals.

We received support for the four proposed components of the OSCA maintenance strategy: statistical design, stakeholder engagement, comprehensive review and quality assurance. Stakeholder engagement received the strongest support, with requests for advance notice to gather data and prepare submissions to the ABS.

Many of you said you wanted a way to engage with us throughout the development process. You would like more time to work with your stakeholders to consult on proposed changes, including the opportunity to provide comment on final proposals before publication.

You suggested additional components that we will continue to take into consideration, such as:

- increasing the visibility of traditionally female-dominated occupations
- ensuring representation of occupations specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- ensuring alignment with other occupation systems and international standards supporting labour mobility and policies, including trans-Tasman harmonisation by collaborating with Stats NZ to map occupation systems for comparability
- requesting the ABS to take on a greater leadership role in encouraging adoption of updates.

The overwhelming majority of you indicated you would implement the proposed updates to OSCA over the next 5 years. Over 80% of you told us that you plan to implement the next update in 2027, and 76% of you said you would implement all three. Those of you who would not implement all three updates either were not responsible for implementation or preferred to wait until completing initial transition to OSCA 2024 Version 1.0.

You told us that the time between updates to ANZSCO had been too long. Most of you indicated that the current proposed timing for OSCA strikes a fair balance between update frequency and what is realistically implementable.

However, there was no consensus on how often updates should occur. Some of you called for updates to be made immediately, especially those who rely on updates to reflect changes in specific occupations of concern.

Others expressed concerns about their ability to implement changes as frequently as we proposed. Those of you responsible for systems and reporting that require an overhaul of metadata for each classification update tended to prefer updates every 5 to 10 years.

Your responses to the barriers to implementation of OSCA question showed us that we have a good grasp of your key concerns. Almost one third of you reported no barriers to implementation. The most significant barrier identified was *“Not having contemporary data at the time of the classification update”*, followed closely by *“Insufficient resources (such as time, money, or personnel required to implement)”*.

You were very supportive of the proposed framework to determine how a submission will be prioritised. You predominantly agreed there needs to be a strong emphasis on national priorities and the broader societal impact.

One quarter of your responses to this consultation included occupation-specific feedback in addition to comments on the proposed maintenance model.

We did

We thank those of you who participated for taking the time to provide feedback. Your feedback will help to shape the OSCA maintenance strategy which we will publish on 28 July 2025.

We heard that you have appreciated the opportunity to engage with us. Building on the strong stakeholder engagement we developed to deliver OSCA 2024 Version 1.0, we will incorporate your suggestions for advance notice of consultations and a continuous feedback loop. We are aware that some issues cannot be resolved without detailed discussions. We commit to having these discussions as required.

To further aid implementation, we will continue to strengthen our new partnerships with key government bodies whose lists, informed by OSCA, are essential for economic planning, workforce development and policy delivery. These partnerships will also help to ensure updates to OSCA are driven by issues of national importance – reflecting both your priorities and our shared commitment to focussing on what matters most for Australia's workforce and economy.

We recognise that the proposed update model does not work for everyone, and we will review it after publishing OSCA 2030. We also recognise that you had additional occupation-specific feedback on the current classification.

We have already begun to prepare the next round of updates, including some generated through this consultation, and will be providing more information on how to participate in the next update soon.

We are committed to providing data alongside classification updates and providing correspondence files and coding tools to support your use of the classification. We will discuss how data will be presented with classification updates in the maintenance strategy, in recognition that these data will support users' analytical needs during the maintenance cycle.

In addition to the maintenance strategy, reinforcing our ongoing commitment to stakeholder engagement, we will be maintaining the [About OSCA](#) page for information on the latest developments to OSCA. This will include timelines for future releases and consultations.

Measuring unpaid care in the Labour Account consultation

We asked

The Australia Bureau of Statistics undertook a consultation process from December 2024 to February 2025 canvassing views on early experimental estimates of the total hours spent on unpaid care, and their monetary value. These new measures will improve the visibility of the contribution of unpaid care to society.

The ABS intends to publish unpaid care estimates on an annual basis in the future. In addition, sex and age demographic breakdowns will be included in the existing Labour Account estimates to facilitate a meaningful point of comparison with some paid work equivalents (timing for the release of the aforementioned components to be determined).

The consultation process sought stakeholder views on the following aspects of the measurement of unpaid care:

- The definition of care work,
- Valuation methods for unpaid care and the ABS' preferred approach,
- Market replacements for unpaid care activities,
- Presenting unpaid care estimates in context,
- Additivity across various unpaid care estimates,
- Utility of age groupings presented, and
- Unpaid adult care measurement.

You said

A large number of responses were received during the consultation period, from both individuals and organisations. The consultation highlighted the importance of recognising the contribution of unpaid carers and supported the ABS for moving towards measuring this activity on a regular basis.

Main themes emerging from the consultation responses included:

- The vast majority (84%) of responses indicated broad support for the ABS definition of care work.
- The vast majority (88%) of responses indicated it would be useful for the ABS to publish a range of estimates using different methodologies.
- The majority (72%) of responses indicated it would be useful to present estimates using the median wage rate for context.
- The majority (60%) of responses indicated publishing sex and age totals separately without forced alignment would be most useful.
- Most responses (38%) indicated no preference for whether age groupings are presented consistently with paid work age groups.

We did

Since the consultation period, further work has been undertaken to build on the initial estimates of unpaid childcare published in November 2024. This work has focussed on populating estimates of unpaid adult care and producing a full time series of both unpaid childcare and unpaid adult care. These additional steps will be described in an upcoming information paper in late June 2025; a series of data download spreadsheets will also be made

available as part of this release.

In compiling these estimates, the ABS has incorporated key aspects of feedback received through the consultation process, this includes:

- publishing a range of measures for various replacement cost options,
- maintaining separate totals for sex and age without forcing alignment,
- presenting age groups which are the most accurate and useful for unpaid care, including separating the 55 years and older age group to 55 to 64 years and 65 years and over, and
- presenting a median wage rate to provide context to the estimates.

The consultation process also highlighted some aspects of unpaid care which were beyond the scope of these first set of experimental estimates. The ABS will continue to investigate and consider these suggestions and will look to incorporate aspects which can be measured in future iterations where possible, given input data source constraints and limitations.

Examples for potential future work include:

- Separately identifying and valuing care for children with a disability.
- Accounting for varying “intensity” of unpaid care provided, for example through accounting for the number of unpaid carers present in a single household.
- What would unpaid care be valued at if a carers payment or equivalent were applied instead of a replacement cost wage rate?
- Separately identifying short term care provided to adults, which is conceptually outside the scope of our care framework, however, may be captured in Time Use Survey estimates.
- Expanding our definition of care to incorporate additional elements where possible.
- Modelling additional financial aspects or costs to the unpaid carer, for example lost superannuation or leave entitlements.

The ABS would like to thank all those who provided responses through the consultation process and the important role this played in shaping the development of unpaid care estimates. For any further comment or information, please contact the ABS by emailing unpaid.care.consultation@abs.gov.au

Public Consultation - Modernising the System of National Accounts and Balance of Payments Manual

We asked

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) recently held a public consultation on how Australia should implement the 2025 System of National Accounts (2025 SNA) and Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Manual 7th Edition (BPM7). The consultation sought feedback on the updates to the manuals with a focus on how ABS should prioritise implementing the supplementary tables and thematic accounts.

As part of the process, the ABS reviewed updates that impact key economic measures such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP). These updates are being assessed and will be implemented where feasible and material to the Australian economy. Making these changes is important to ensure Australia remains compliant with international statistical standards.

The public consultation opened on 10 December 2024 and closed on 31 January 2025.

To support participation, the ABS held a [webinar](#) to explain the proposed changes and help people make submissions.

These updates will support informed decision making by government, industry and the broader community by more accurately measuring contemporary economic activities and industries.

In addition to the public consultation, the ABS also consulted with 13 government agencies, including Treasury and the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA).

You said

A small number of public submissions were received from individuals, organisations, and government.

These submissions highlighted the following changes as being particularly beneficial for their macroeconomic analysis:

- Distribution accounts
- Environmental classifications
- Digital supply-use tables
- Health care

No major concerns were raised about the proposed updates to the System of National Accounts and Balance of Payments.

The feedback from public submissions aligned with the priorities identified during consultations with the government agencies.

The consultation with government agencies emphasised the importance of:

- Maintaining international comparability
- Simultaneous implementation of 2025 SNA and BPM7 updates that impact key economic aggregates to avoid iterative revisions to time series

We did

The ABS has completed its review of these submissions.

To guide our decisions, we developed a prioritisation framework. This framework considered factors such as public value, international comparability, materiality to published estimates and how feasible each change would be to implement. It will help us determine which changes should be prioritised in the updated System of National Accounts and Balance of Payments manuals.

Changes that impact Australia's international comparability of key economic measures such as GDP were highly prioritised. These include updates such as the inclusion of data as an asset and a return on capital for non-market producers. Other core changes such as the inclusion of depletion and the split ownership of natural resources are considered highly desirable for informing policy.

Beyond these core updates, we identified several other changes as both important to stakeholders and feasible to be implemented:

- Distribution accounts
- Environmental classifications
- Digital supply use tables.

Consultation with government agencies, also identified other changes that would better illustrate:

- The net-zero transition
- International trade
- Digital activity

The ABS will use this feedback to make a recommendation to the Australian Government.

We thank those who contributed their feedback during the consultation.

Any questions?

Please email

na.transformation@abs.gov.au with any questions on this consultation or for further information.

2023 - 24 Review of Australian Standard Classification of Languages (ASCL)

We asked

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) commenced a second round of public consultation on the Australian Standard Classification of Languages (ASCL) on 2 October 2024 and was open for 11 weeks. The first round of public consultation, held in late 2023, sought feedback on the scope of the review. The second round of public

consultation sought feedback on the proposed changes to the classification as well as any key implementation issues for users of the ASCL.

The aim of the review is to update the ASCL to reflect the Languages used in the current Australian community. These updates will help ensure the production of high-quality data, improved data analysis and informed decision making. Submissions from this second round of public consultation will inform the changes made to the ASCL in preparation for the 2026 Census.

You said

A small number of submissions were received from individuals and organisations.

Submissions received suggested:

- Additional languages
- Changes to ASCL labels and the placement of languages in the new structure
- Changes to the ASCL that have not been investigated in the current review.

The ABS did not receive any submissions that raised major concerns about the proposed changes to the ASCL.

We did

The ABS has completed reviewing these submissions and finalising changes to the ASCL. The updated version of the classification, which implements the findings from the 2023-24 review, will be published on the ABS website on 28 March 2025.

The ABS thanks those who have taken the time to provide feedback during the two phases of consultation.

Any feedback that has been provided, but not investigated in the current review, will be considered in the next review of ASCL.

Future consultation

While this was the final round of public consultation on the proposed changes to the ASCL, you can provide feedback on the ASCL at any time, by contacting the ABS using the email address below.

Any questions?

Please email standards@abs.gov.au with any questions on this consultation or for further information.

Business Characteristics Survey Consultation

We asked

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) consulted with users of the Business Characteristics Survey (BCS) to receive feedback on proposed changes to survey content and the frequency of the survey.

BCS currently publishes data annually under two separate releases: *Innovation in Australian Business* (8158.0) and *Characteristics of Australian Business* (8167.0). Each release contains estimates of key business characteristics along with an alternating annual release of detailed information on the business use of information and communication technologies, or on innovation related activities.

From 2024-25 the collection will move to a biennial frequency. A public consultation was held from 20 August to 11 October 2024 to gather comments on the proposed design of BCS and an understanding of user data requirements.

You said

The consultation highlighted the importance of BCS data in policy and planning activities by government agencies, as well as for academic research by other users. Feedback from users indicated the importance of BCS in capturing data on new or emerging areas of interest to provide insights into business characteristics, performance, productivity and growth analysis.

Common themes emerging from the consultation included:

- Strong support for the retention of content on innovation activities, business use of ICT, and data on business finance and general characteristics.
- Strong interest in data on business cyber security incidents and measures, and capturing data on business use of clean technologies.
- The need for data to be published at a range of levels, including employment size, industry, region, and/or innovation status.
- The importance of BCS data in the Business Longitudinal Analysis Data Environment (BLADE) to enable microdata analysis and the need to maintain the BCS time series as much as possible.
- Support for the survey content from both releases to be combined into one survey, and continued publication of the same level of detail, where possible.
- Interest in capturing data on supply chains and reasons why businesses seek finance.
- The need to retain content where there are no alternative data sources available.
- A preference for the survey to include a supplementary module of questions to capture data in response to emerging trends or technological advances.
- Support for the ABS to engage with users on potential future topics that could be included in the survey.

Feedback was also received that is beyond the scope of the current BCS collection. This feedback will be evaluated for potential integration in future, including considerations of suggested new topics for inclusion as core content or part of a modular suite.

We did

Stakeholder consultation has been pivotal in shaping the design of the biennial BCS. As a result of the feedback, the ABS will

1. Combine important content from the *Characteristics of Australian Business* and the *Innovation in Australian Business* surveys into one collection. Data will be collected and published every two years.
2. Design the survey with an option of a small, flexible modular component to capture data on emerging areas of interest or to meet point-in-time data needs.
3. Continue to publish high quality data by employment size, industry, state/territory, and location, where appropriate.
4. Continue to support microdata analyses in BLADE through the provision of high-quality data files following each BCS cycle.
5. Continue to offer services to respond to data needs through data consultancies on request.
6. Investigate options to address data gaps relating to supply chains, business finance, and management capabilities.

Next steps

Over the next four months the ABS will design and develop the new biennial collection, including field testing to ensure the survey continues to collect high quality data on business characteristics, business use of ICTs, and innovation activities of Australian businesses.

ANZSCO comprehensive review - consultation round 4

We asked

From 25 July to 6 September 2024, the ABS conducted a fourth and final round of public consultation for the Comprehensive review of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO). For this round of consultation, the ABS sought views on the proposed structure of the classification, any implementation concerns and feedback on the web page layout of the draft classification.

This fourth round of consultation was an opportunity for users of the classification to provide feedback for a final time before the classification update is finalised in December 2024.

Organisations and individuals were invited to provide both positive and negative feedback on the draft classification which is based on the proposed changes from the previous three rounds of consultation.

You said

The ABS received over 200 feedback responses from all levels of government, businesses, Jobs & Skills Councils, industry bodies/associations, unions, academics and individuals.

To inform the final updates to the classification structure, its implementation and any other proposed changes, collaborative workshops were organised with a wide range of stakeholders eager to participate and contribute their expertise.

Stakeholders provided both positive and negative feedback on:

- changes already made to occupations following the first three rounds of consultation
- groupings of occupations within the classification structure, and
- changes made to the layout of the classification.

While most changes made to ANZSCO during the review were welcomed by stakeholders, consultation also highlighted areas for refinement, additional emerging occupations and concerns regarding implementation of the new classification.

We did

After four rounds of consultation during 2023 and 2024 and receiving over 800 submissions, the consultation phase of the comprehensive review of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) has concluded. The ABS is now reviewing the feedback received on the draft classification before finalising the updated classification.

Next Steps

The classification update will be released on the ABS website in December 2024.

The updated classification will be reflected in labour market statistics from August 2026 and in the 2026 Census data. This will improve visibility of new and emerging occupations.

We are also working on a plan for more frequent updates of the classification, and a way for users to provide input to these updates.

We extend our thanks and appreciation to all stakeholders who have provided contributions and expressed their views in the comprehensive review and update of the classification.



ASGS Edition 4 Consultation

We asked

In preparation for the [Australian Statistical Geography Standard](#) (ASGS) Edition 4 due to be released in 2026, the ABS has been consulting with stakeholders to ensure this framework is still meeting user needs. Between May and September 2024, we invited all stakeholders to contribute their views and provide feedback on the ASGS.

You said

A total of 96 submissions were submitted with feedback received from all levels of government, commercial organisations, non-government agencies, academics and individuals.

A summary of feedback is presented below:

Main Structure

82% of respondents rated the Main Structure as either very suitable or suitable with only 5% of respondents rating the Main Structure as either unsuitable or very unsuitable. Some respondents noted that specific geographies within the structure were exceeding their population design criteria.

71% of respondents who reported using Greater Capital City Statistical Areas (GCCSA) rated the geography as either very suitable or suitable with 8% rating GCCSA as unsuitable or very unsuitable.

Majority of respondents were supportive of minimal change to Statistical Area Level 3, Statistical Area Level 4 and Greater Capital City Statistical Areas geographies for ASGS Edition 4 (2026) and were supportive of reviewing those geographies ahead of ASGS Edition 5 (2031). Respondents noted that population growth and change needed to be addressed, as well as balancing the impacts of change on time series for these geographies. Respondents recommended communicating any proposed changes early and the need for support to manage changes through the provision of correspondences. Better alignment of these geographies to administrative regions were flagged for consideration as part of any review.

Indigenous Structure

58% of respondents who used the Indigenous Structure found it fit for purpose, while 6.5% of respondents found the structure unsuitable or very unsuitable. Respondents noted that Indigenous Locations may contain more than one community which was viewed as an issue. It was also suggested to name communities after language groups.

Respondents suggested for future editions of the ASGS, consideration to be given for inclusion of the following geographies: first nations and language groups, native title, and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies map.

Urban Centres and Localities

79% of respondents were supportive of adopting Mesh Blocks as the building block geography for Urban Centres and Localities for ASGS Edition 4 (2026). Some respondents noted concerns about time series and impacts of design on Significant Urban Areas in some locations.

Additional issues raised included the naming convention for 'Rural Residential' which could be confused with land planning zones, and the State/Territory aggregated based rural residential definition limited the ability to analyse specific rural residential community locations. It was also suggested that specific rural residential community locations should take on the name of nearby Urban Centres and Localities. Other issues raised included data availability for Mesh Block built Urban Centres and Localities.

Remoteness Structure

Over 70% of respondents who used Remoteness Areas found them to be fit for purpose. Some of the concerns raised included the lack of recognition for seasonal access to remote communities in the calculation of remoteness and the need for more distinction within existing remoteness categories.

There were mixed responses to our proposal of a review of the structure for ASGS Edition 5 (2031). Some suggested improvements and the need for revision while others stressed the importance of keeping it unchanged. Most concerns raised about a review of Remoteness Structure included impact on time series, more information required on methodology and data sources, concern that the classification could be removed from the structure, and how future change may impact organisations that use Remoteness Areas.

Non ABS Structure

A majority of respondents, 91%, had no significant concerns with removing Tourism Regions from the Non ABS Structure for Edition 4 (2026), provided correspondences to mathematically convert data to and from Tourism Regions were published. Some concerns were raised if Tourism Regions were no longer defined by any organisation as well as concerns around education on how the geography relates to other ASGS structures if removed from the classification.

90% of respondents had no significant concerns with removing Australian Drainage Divisions from the Non ABS Structure for Edition 4 (2026). Some concerns were raised if removed from the ASGS, due to the use of Australian Drainage Divisions in local planning activities.

A number of other administrative boundaries were suggested for inclusion in the Non ABS structure of the ASGS. These suggestions were able to be grouped under the themes of health, environment and government. Examples include:

- Primary Health Networks
- Local Health Networks
- Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics broadacre zones and regions
- Council Wards/Divisions

Alignment to cadastre

The majority of respondents did not raise concerns about updating the alignment of the ASGS to cadastre (the geographic representation of parcels) for Edition 4 (2026), and our assessment that it would have almost no impact on geocoding at the Mesh Block level. Respondents were supportive on realignment in cases where it would affect ABS approximations of administrative boundaries including suburbs and Local Government Areas.

We did

We reviewed stakeholder submissions and conducted follow-up meetings with those who requested further discussions. We used these insights to inform decisions for the design of ASGS Edition 4 (2026).

These decisions are available in the [Outcome from the review of the Australian Statistical Geography Standard \(ASGS\)](#) publication which includes:

- Planned changes between ASGS Edition 3 (2021) and Edition 4 (2026)
- A provisional ASGS Edition 4 diagram
- Proposed release schedule of ASGS Edition 4
- Future plans for ASGS Edition 5 (2031)

We encourage stakeholders to begin planning for ASGS Edition 4 which will be progressively released from July 2026.

Please email geography@abs.gov.au with any questions or for further information.

Design of a complete monthly Consumer Price Index – Public Consultation

We asked

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) will release a complete monthly measure of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) by late 2025, as part of its transformative program called *Big Data, Timely Insights: Phase 2* (BDTI).

Stakeholders were invited to provide input on key aspects of the CPI publication design during a public consultation held from 16 November to 15 December 2023. The public consultation sought formal submissions on this proposed design covering key areas such as release timing, data requirements, publication specifics, and methodologies.

The public consultation was informed by a preliminary *Discovery Stage* in October 2023, where the ABS engaged directly with a selection of stakeholders to gain insights into their priorities and to lay the groundwork for the initial CPI design.

You said

Feedback on the design of the complete monthly CPI aligned closely with stakeholder insights gathered during the initial *Discovery Stage*. The primary requests voiced by stakeholders included:

- **Prioritise accuracy and data coverage** of the complete monthly CPI over improved timeliness of the publication's release after the end of the reference period, with backing for the ABS's proposal that the CPI publication continue to be released around four-weeks after the reference period.
- Support for maintaining the **same level of detailed commentary and analysis** as published in the quarterly CPI with requests for further expansion of the CPI analytical series where feasible.
- **Monthly data content consistent with the current quarterly CPI data series** incorporating capital city and expenditure class (EC) level data.
- **Continue a quarterly data series** for continuity of timeseries analysis and legislated indexation requirements.

Further insights provided by stakeholders included:

- Support for publishing data with more decimal places for increased precision.
- Request for a monthly analytical series such as trimmed mean, weighted median, and goods and services categories.
- Support for transparency regarding data collection frequency, coverage, and updates to the CPI Concepts, Sources, and Methods (CSM).

Feedback was also received that is beyond the scope of the BDTI transformation program. This feedback will be evaluated for potential integration in future, including considerations such as expanded product classifications for further international comparability, expanding the Selected Living Costs Index (SLCI) groups, and compiling Regional CPI data.

A complete summary of the public consultation feedback is provided in the **Results** section below.

We did

Stakeholder consultation has been pivotal in shaping the design of the complete monthly CPI. As a result, commencing late 2025, the complete monthly CPI will:

1. **Be released around four weeks** after the reference period on a Wednesday.
2. **Prioritise data accuracy** by implementing comprehensive data collection throughout the entirety of the reference month, rather than restricting it to only the first two or three weeks.
3. **Contain the same amount of data, detailed commentary and analysis** that is in the current quarterly CPI.
4. **Include a monthly seasonally adjusted series and analytical series** such as trimmed mean, weighted median, and tradables and non-tradables series.

Initially, due to some of the monthly time series being shorter than the length required for standard seasonal adjustment, only a limited number of seasonally adjusted series will be published in the first two years. The ABS is exploring the quality of trimmed mean and weighted median measures when some expenditure classes cannot be seasonally adjusted with standard methods. We will publish further information on these methods prior to publication.

The existing **quarterly series will be maintained**, including analytical measures, to ensure continuity for widely used indexation arrangements and time series analysis.

Additionally, the intended design will also include:

- All groups (headline) CPI, Groups (11), Sub-groups (33), and Expenditure classes (87) for each capital city.
- Contribution to annual and monthly percentage change to the All groups CPI.
- Index numbers published to two decimal places instead of the existing one decimal place. Movements will be presented to one decimal place.
- No revisions unless there is an exceptional circumstance, such as to correct a significant error, in line with the standard practice for CPI.

The design of the complete monthly CPI is provided in the **Results** section below.

Next Steps

Stakeholders will receive ongoing updates from the ABS on the progress of the complete monthly measure of the CPI, methodology, and refined design details.

An implementation plan, along with a mock-up showcasing the complete monthly CPI comprising time series tables and metadata, will be unveiled closer to the publication date. Throughout this period, the ABS will maintain the quarterly release of the [Consumer Price Index, Australia](#) and the [Monthly Consumer Price Index Indicator](#).

Census data feedback survey

We asked

As part of our preparation for the 2026 Census, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) have been actively seeking feedback to inform the design of the 2026 Census data products and outputs to ensure our products continue to meet the needs of data users. Part of our consultation process included an online survey, which was available on select Census pages of the ABS website and targeted towards Census data users. The survey ran from 10 October 2023 to 11 December 2023 and focused on understanding data needs, how Census data is used and collecting feedback on existing Census data products.

You said

The ABS received survey submissions from over 150 users. Feedback was received from multiple levels of government, businesses, community groups, academics, educators and individuals. The feedback we received was diverse and insightful - it highlighted the importance of Census data products and the need for continuous improvement to meet the evolving needs of users. Some key points from the feedback include:

- QuickStats and TableBuilder are the most popular products among Census data users.
- Users find QuickStats easy to use and a good starting point for data queries. They appreciate the format, the ability to start a new search from the results page and the extent of geographies available. Users would like to see more data here however, and the ability to download tables.
- Users appreciate the customisation and granularity of data available through TableBuilder, however find the loss of functionality to preview a table burdensome.
- Community Profiles are mostly used for validation purposes and when QuickStats detail is exhausted. Users appreciate the menu page and uniform layout. Users find the specifics of the tables often don't meet their needs.
- DataPacks users appreciate the means and medians made available and the design of this product that make it suitable for coding and use in other software. However, users note the formatting is daunting when trying to examine data themselves and downloading files separately time-consuming.

We did

In response to the feedback, we are currently reviewing our products to ensure they continue to meet the needs of our users. We have reached out to selected users who expressed interest in further consultation and will continue to do so as we move towards the release of 2026 Census data in mid-2027.

While our recommendations and prototyping are still being formalised, we want to assure participants that your feedback is shaping our decision-making process. We are committed to releasing quality data products and appreciate the time and effort users have taken to engage with us. Thank you for your ongoing support and engagement. We look forward to sharing more updates with you as we progress towards 2026 Census data release.

Any questions?

Please email census.data@abs.gov.au with any questions on this consultation or for further information.

2023 Review of Australian Standard Classification of Languages (ASCL)

We asked

The public consultation ran for 12 weeks, from 18 September 2023 to 8 December 2023. The ABS sought feedback on the preliminary scope of the review (below) and requested other issues also be identified.

2023 Review of the Australian Standard Classification of Languages (ASCL) preliminary scope:

1. Investigation into the creation of new 4-digit groups (Languages) in the ASCL.
2. Appropriate representation of existing Languages (4-digit groups) in ASCL.
3. Investigation into how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages (Broad group 8) are represented in the ASCL.
4. Investigation into representation of sign languages and signed languages in the ASCL.
5. Investigation into the structure of Broad group 9, Other Languages.

For more detailed information on the scope, please refer to *2023 ASCL Review Scope v1.0*, document attached.

You said

This public consultation generated 31 submissions from a range of individuals and organisations.

Most of the items in the preliminary scope were broadly supported for inclusion in the review. The topics in the preliminary scope that attracted the most submissions were the identification of new 4-digit languages, the inaccurate representation of existing languages or identification of languages missing from the classification, and issues with how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages are represented in the ASCL.

In addition to the issues outlined in the scope, a number of other concerns were raised, including:

- Feedback highlighted a lack of transparency and consistency across the framing of all language Broad groups. Many respondents asked for clarification on the labelling and naming conventions used in the ASCL, along with queries related to alternate titles, language variations or dialects.
- Concerns were also raised regarding the current coding structure and lack of stated advice that clearly explains why some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are included in the ASCL at the 4-digit level while others are not.
- Feedback also suggested that the ABS should engage with experts on the topic of sign and signed languages, especially those that relate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

Other suggestions included:

- The need to provide further explanatory information to users regarding the classification principles applied at the 4-digit level of the classification. Some users would also benefit from further advice around the criteria that has been applied to the nec/nfd categories.
- Feedback indicated that users would like more coverage of language groups and community recognized language titles.

We did

The ABS is currently reviewing these submissions and is working closely with stakeholders to draft changes to the ASCL. The proposed changes to ASCL and supporting information will be presented via the ABS Consultation Hub in the second half of 2024. Stakeholders will then be able to provide further feedback before the final update is published in early 2025.

Submissions that included relevant feedback for 2026 Census Content development and design will be provided to the 2026 Census Content team. Please note that stakeholders do not need to provide their submission again.

Future consultation

The next round of public consultation on the proposed changes to the ASCL is expected to be conducted in the second half of 2024. However, if you would like to provide feedback before then, please contact the ABS at standards@abs.gov.au.

Further information is also available in the FAQ and Scope documents under the heading **Related**.

Any questions?

Please email standards@abs.gov.au with any questions on this consultation or for further information.

ANZSCO comprehensive review - consultation round 3

We asked

From 10 October to 5 December 2023, the ABS opened public consultation seeking views on what changes should be made to selected occupations to inform the comprehensive review of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO).

This third round of consultation was an opportunity for users of the classification to provide feedback on occupations that fell within the following focus areas¹:

Accommodation and food services	Postal, courier, pick-up and delivery services	Road transport
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	Print and internet publishing	Sports activities
Arts and recreation	Public administration	Television, stage and broadcasting
Defence	Public order, safety and regulatory	Warehousing

	services	
Legal services	Rail transport	Water transport
Personal and other services	Retail trade	

¹Note, occupation focus areas are designed for consultation purposes only and are not intended to be a permanent feature of the classification structure.

Organisations and individuals were invited to make submissions about the accuracy of current occupation skill levels and descriptions and any occupations anticipated to emerge in the next 5 to 10 years.

You said

The ABS received over 170 submissions, including valuable feedback from all levels of government, businesses, industry bodies/associations, academics, and individuals.

To inform the classification changes, collaborative workshops were organised for various occupation focus areas. These workshops attracted a wide range of stakeholders eager to participate and contribute their expertise, ultimately enhancing the quality of occupation information within their respective fields.

Feedback received recommended improvements to occupation descriptions and classification structures. It also highlighted the evolution of certain occupations and the emergence of diverse fields and unique jobs that stakeholders would like to see included in the classification. An important topic that resonated with stakeholders was the evolving skill level requirements for different occupations and how these requirements have changed over time.

We did

To keep stakeholders informed of how their input is influencing changes to the classification we have published our preliminary view of proposed occupation changes from Consultation round three. These are presented in the Publish Results section below for the 17 occupation focus areas from this third round. A preliminary proposed changes document has been created for each focus area.

These changes reflect the collaborative efforts and insights provided by stakeholders, ensuring that the classification remains relevant and responsive to user requirements and accurately represents the evolving landscape of the Australian labour market.

A final consultation round from 25 July to 6 September 2024 will allow users an opportunity to provide feedback on the complete set of proposed changes to the classification structure before finalising the classification for release in December 2024. The newly proposed structure includes reorganising or consolidating existing occupation groups, creating new groups for emerging occupations, or adapting the structure to better reflect the relationships between occupations.

2022-23 Review of the Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups (ASCRG) - Consultation Round 2

We asked

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) commenced a second round of public consultation on the Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups (ASCRG) on 18 September 2023. The first round of public consultation, held in late 2022, sought feedback on the scope of the review. This consultation provided an opportunity for the public to comment on the proposed changes to the classification.

The aim of the review is to update the ASCRG to reflect the current Australian community. These updates will ensure production of high-quality data, improving data analysis and informing decision making. Submissions from this second round of public consultation will inform the changes made to the ASCRG in preparation for the 2026

Census.

This round of public consultation ran for 11 weeks and submissions were sought regarding any inaccuracies in the classification; any unintended impacts of the proposed changes, as well as any key implementation issues for users.

You said

A small number of submissions were received; these were from individuals and organisations.

Submissions received suggested:

- Consistency in the ordering of groups.
- Changes to the ASCRG that had not been investigated in the current review.

The ABS did not receive any submissions raising concerns about the proposed changes to the ASCRG.

We did

The ABS is currently reviewing these submissions and finalising changes to the ASCRG. The updated version of the classification, which implements the findings from the 2022-23 review, will be published on the ABS website on 26 March, 2024.

The ABS thanks those who have taken the time to provide feedback during the two phases of consultation. Any feedback that has been provided, but not investigated in the current review, will be considered in the next review of ASCRG.

Changes to the Religious Affiliation Standard (RAS) continue to be considered through the 2026 Census topic review. The outcomes of Phase two are available [here](#). Once the review of RAS has been finalised, the outcome will be published on the ABS website.

Future consultation

This is the final round of public consultation on the proposed changes to the ASCRG. However, if you would like to provide feedback on the ASCRG at any time, please contact the ABS using the email address below.

Any questions?

Please email standards@abs.gov.au with any questions on this consultation or for further information.

2026 Census topic consultation - Phase two

We asked

From 27 July to 8 September 2023, the ABS undertook phase two of the 2026 Census topic consultation. This consultation invited feedback on proposed changes to Census topics.

During this consultation, the ABS specifically sought feedback on topics where further information was required to help inform our assessment and recommendation. These topics included:

- Ancestry and Ethnic identity
- Labour Force status
- Main language other than English used at home
- Number of children ever born
- Number of employees (employed by owner managers)
- Number of motor vehicles
- Religious affiliation
- Status in employment
- Unpaid work – domestic activities

You said

The ABS received 213 submissions in this consultation. The submissions were received via the ABS Consultation Hub and email from all levels of government, businesses, community groups, advocacy groups, industry bodies/

associations, academics and individuals. Twelve submissions received during the consultation window had multiple individuals and/or organisations contributing to the submission.

Of the topics the ABS specifically sought feedback on, the most common topic included in submissions was Religious affiliation, followed by Ancestry and Ethnic identity. While the ABS advised that feedback was not required for other shortlisted topics, there was an option in the Consultation Hub to provide feedback if desired. The most common topics included in submissions where feedback was not specifically requested were Gender, Sex, Sexual orientation, Variations of sex characteristics, and Attendance at an educational institution.

Some submissions suggested content that was out of scope of the phase two consultation. This included topics that were requested in the first phase of public consultation but were not shortlisted, new topics not previously requested, and submissions that were related to other ABS data collections or Census collection procedures. These submissions have been referred to the relevant areas of the ABS for further consideration where relevant.

We did

- During phase two of the consultation, the ABS assessed 32 topics for addition, change or removal.
- 17 topics, including 5 new topics and 12 existing topics, have progressed to the development and testing stage.
- Three topics are still under consideration for removal.
- One topic will be recommended to move back to a ten-year collection cycle and be collected again in the 2031 Census.

The ABS has published outcomes from the public consultation. The publication [2026 Census topic review: Phase two directions](#) is available on the ABS website.

Where to from here?

The ABS will continue to refine the shortlist of potential content changes during the development and testing stage, prior to making a recommendation to Government in mid-2024.

The ABS will publish the final list of topics on the ABS website in late 2025.

ANZSCO comprehensive review - consultation round 2

We asked

From 15 June to 11 August 2023, the ABS opened public consultation seeking views on what changes should be made to selected occupations to inform the comprehensive review of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO).

This second round of consultation was an opportunity for users of the classification to provide feedback on occupations that fell within the following focus areas¹:

Air and space transport	Allied health	Architectural, engineering and technical services
Construction	Electricity, gas, water and waste services	Manufacturing
Medical, nursing and other health care services	Mining	Property operators and real estate
Repair and maintenance	Spatial, surveying and mapping services	Telecommunications
Tourism services		

¹Note, occupation focus areas are designed for consultation purposes only and are not intended to be a permanent feature of the classification structure.

Organisations and individuals were invited to make submissions about the accuracy of current occupation skill levels and descriptions and any occupations anticipated to emerge in the next 5 to 10 years.

You said

The ABS received over 200 submissions, including valuable feedback from all levels of government, businesses, industry bodies/associations, academics, and individuals.

To inform the classification changes, collaborative workshops were organised for various occupation focus areas.

These workshops attracted a wide range of stakeholders eager to participate and contribute their expertise, ultimately enhancing the quality of occupation information within their respective fields.

Feedback received recommended improvements to occupation descriptions and classification structures. It also highlighted the evolution of certain occupations and the emergence of diverse fields and unique jobs that stakeholders would like to see included in the classification. An important topic that resonated with stakeholders was the evolving skill level requirements for different occupations and how these requirements have changed over time.

We did

To keep stakeholders informed of how their input is influencing changes to the classification we have published our preliminary view of proposed change from Consultation round two. These are presented in the Publish Results section below.

Since the first iteration of this document was published, minor updates have been made to a handful of occupations. We have updated the format and contents based on stakeholder feedback and further research. The format of the document has been updated to improve usability based on feedback received and a preliminary proposed changes document has now been created for each focus area.

These changes reflect the collaborative efforts and insights provided by stakeholders, ensuring that the classification remains relevant and responsive to user requirements and accurately represents the evolving landscape of the Australian labour market.

A final consultation round in 25 July to 6 September 2024 will allow users an opportunity to provide feedback on the complete set of proposed changes to the classification structure before finalising the classification for release in December 2024. The newly proposed structure includes reorganising or consolidating existing occupation groups, creating new groups for emerging occupations, or adapting the structure to better reflect the relationships between occupations.

2026 Census topic consultation

We asked

From 28 February to 28 April 2023, the ABS opened public consultation seeking views on what changes should be made to the 2026 Census topics.

Organisations and individuals were invited to make submissions about information needs not currently collected by the ABS and to provide evidence of:

- The topic being of current national importance.
- A need for data at the national level, and either the local level or for small population groups.
- A likely continuing need for data on the topic following the Census.

You said

The ABS received 260 submissions. The submissions were received via the ABS Consultation Hub, email, mail, and

meetings (where explicitly requested by the stakeholder for minutes to be included as a submission).

The ABS also considered more than 500 other pieces of feedback as part of the consultation, including recent ABS standards and classification reviews, recommendations from parliamentary inquiries, letters to the Australian Statistician, Members of Parliament and other correspondence received by the ABS since June 2018, and 2021 Census submissions for six shortlisted topics.

Submissions and feedback were received from all levels of government, businesses, community groups, advocacy groups, industry bodies/associations, academics and individuals.

We did

- During phase one of the consultation, the ABS identified strong public value for the inclusion of 12 new topics and to make changes to 16 existing topics.
- Four existing topics have been identified for potential removal from the 2026 Census.
- The ABS has published a shortlist of the topics being considered for the 2026 Census. The publication provides a summary of the feedback received during the first phase of consultation. It outlines new topics being considered for inclusion, existing topics where change is being considered and topics being considered for removal. The publication [2026 Census topic review: Phase one directions](#) is available on the ABS website.

Where to from here?

Phase two of the 2026 Census Topic consultation is open from Thursday 27 July until Friday 8 September. This is the time to let us know if there will be impacts for you or your organisation if we changed or removed one of the shortlisted topics.

The ABS will further assess the shortlisted topics for feasibility and to determine if the Census is the most appropriate way to provide data on the topic. This will inform the decision on which topics proceed to testing.

In late 2023, the ABS will share the outcomes of phase two, including the topics recommended for removal and topics that have proceeded to testing.

In 2024, the ABS will make a recommendation to the Australian Government on the topics to be included on the 2026 Census. The final list of topics to be included in the Census will be published by the ABS in late 2025.

ANZSCO comprehensive review - consultation round 1

We asked

From 1 February to 28 April 2023, the ABS opened public consultation seeking views on what changes should be made to selected occupations to inform the comprehensive review of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO).

This first round of consultation was an opportunity for users of the classification to provide feedback on occupations that fell within the following focus areas¹:

Accounting services	Administrative services
Aged care and disability services	Childcare services
Computer system design and related services	Education and training
Financial and insurance services	Library and other information services
Management and related consulting services	Market research and advertising services
Scientific research services	Statistical services
Welfare and social assistance services	

¹Note, occupation focus areas are designed for consultation purposes only and are not intended to be a permanent feature of the classification structure.

Organisations and individuals were invited to make submissions about the accuracy of current occupation skill levels and descriptions and any occupations anticipated to emerge in the next 5 to 10 years.

You said

The ABS received over 190 submissions, including valuable feedback from all levels of government, businesses, industry bodies/associations, academics, and individuals.

To inform the classification changes, collaborative workshops were organised for various occupation focus areas. These workshops attracted a wide range of stakeholders eager to participate and contribute their expertise, ultimately enhancing the quality of occupation information within their respective fields.

Feedback received recommended improvements to occupation descriptions and classification structures. It also highlighted the evolution of certain occupations and the emergence of diverse fields and unique jobs that stakeholders would like to see included in the classification. An important topic that resonated with stakeholders was the evolving skill level requirements for different occupations and how these requirements have changed over time.

We did

To keep stakeholders informed of how their input is influencing changes to the classification we have published our preliminary view of proposed change from Consultation round one. These are presented in the Publish Results section below.

Since the first iteration of this document was published, minor updates have been made to a handful of occupations. We have updated the format and contents based on stakeholder feedback and further research. The format of the document has been updated to improve usability based on feedback received and a preliminary proposed changes document has now been created for each focus area.

These changes reflect the collaborative efforts and insights provided by stakeholders, ensuring that the classification remains relevant and responsive to user requirements and accurately represents the evolving landscape of the Australian labour market.

A final consultation round from 25 July to 6 September 2024 will allow users an opportunity to provide feedback on the complete set of proposed changes to the classification structure before finalising the classification for release in December 2024. The newly proposed structure includes reorganising or consolidating existing occupation groups, creating new groups for emerging occupations, or adapting the structure to better reflect the relationships between occupations.

Measurement of Digital Platform Work and Workers

We asked

The ABS commenced public consultation on 14 October 2022 on the measurement of Digital Platform Work and Workers.

The public consultation ran for around 6 weeks and sought feedback on:

1. The conceptual framework – the conceptual understanding of digital platform work as applied to the Australian context; and
2. The measurement approach – the proposed survey topics to be incorporated in the digital platform work experimental survey module for 2023/24

You said

This public consultation generated a small number of submissions from a variety of stakeholders, including government, business, and the public. This was in line with expectations, given this is a new measurement space where there aren't many longstanding experts. We specifically sought feedback on the measurement approach the

ABS was taking and the conceptual framework that had been developed. The feedback received is summarised below.

The Conceptual framework:

There was strong support for the framework the ABS developed, to better communicate and understand digital platform workers and work. The distinction the ABS made between labour services and other forms of digital platform work was considered appropriate, along with distinguishing between different types of tasks (e.g. personal transport and food delivery).

The Measurement Approach:

There was broad support for the current experimental measurement approach the ABS is using. The submissions noted that the priority information is being captured and also identified a range of additional data items that could be collected to broaden and enhance the data collected for the 2023/24 survey cycle.

The feedback provided has been summarised below:

- Reference period - expand the timeframe beyond the last four weeks, to ensure people who undertake digital platform work infrequently are included.
- Task type - include further specificity in task types (e.g. type of caring tasks).
- Industry - present an industry distribution of digital platform work.
- Digital platform hours worked - a variety of options were suggested for collecting information on digital platform work hours worked and whether more paid hours were preferred by workers.
- Reason for undertaking digital platform work - ability to select more than one reason.
- Working conditions and security - level of control or influence the respondent has over digital platform work arrangements.
- Platform use - Whether multiple platforms are used and how this is managed by the worker.
- Safety and risk - perception of safety at work, understanding of work health and safety obligations, measures available to reduce risk.
- Earnings - allowing respondents to report earnings in smaller increments (e.g. less than 10% of earnings, etc).
- Other data sources - exploration of other mechanisms for collecting data, such as administrative data.

We did

The ABS is grateful for the submissions received through this consultation process and has taken these into consideration in determining the content for inclusion in the next stage of the experimental digital platform work survey module, for the 2023/24 financial year. As the module is part of a broader survey program, new content needs to be balanced with other competing priorities within the program and the need to ensure a reasonable experience for survey respondents.

The following changes will be incorporated into the digital platform work survey module, which will be progressively collected from July 2023:

Reference period/frequency

- the reference period has been expanded to include; any digital platform work tasks undertaken in the past 12 months, detailed questions are asked about work undertaken in the previous 4 weeks, and whether tasks have been undertaken within the Labour Force Survey Reference Week; and
- frequency that DPW tasks are undertaken (e.g. weekly, monthly etc) is requested to understand how regularly digital platform work is undertaken.

DPW task type

- further questions added to determine more task information, including-the type of delivery work undertaken (e.g. food, grocery or parcels) and the type of caring tasks performed (e.g. disability care, aged care, childcare etc).

Working conditions/hours

- whether the respondent has a preference for more hours of digital platform work; and
- how work is allocated and how hours and price are set.

Work safety

- whether a workplace accident has occurred undertaking digital platform work
- perception of safety at work; and

- whether covered for personal accident insurance in case of a work-related accident.

The ABS will continue to inform the evolutionary approach to measuring digital platform work and workers. Any additional feedback is welcome at measuring.employment.consultation@abs.gov.au.

Help Shape the Future of Classification on Industries in Australia

We asked

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) commenced public consultation 'Help Shape the Future of Classification on Industries' on 26 September 2022.

The consultation's purpose was to collect information on how the industry classification is currently used by businesses or organisations, understand the issues with the current Australia and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) and whether the revised International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC) could meet these needs. The consultation also sought to understand any barriers to implementing a revised ANZSIC or alternate industry classification. This information is to be used in the development of a roadmap to review Australia's Standard industrial classification.

Public consultation ran for 9 weeks, 26 September 2022 till 25 November 2022, and specifically sought feedback on:

1. The use of industry classifications and the purpose of that use.
2. The business characteristics of most importance when classifying a business.
3. The revised ISIC and if it would be a suitable alternative for ANZSIC 2006.
4. The current issues with ANZSIC 2006 and what users would like to see covered in a future industrial classification.
5. The barriers for their organisation to implement a new classification, including an estimate of the amount of time it would take to implement changes.

You said

The public consultation generated 62 submissions from a wide range of federal government, state government and private industry stakeholders.

The majority of submissions we received highlighted the use of industry classifications for industry specific research, analysis of the Australian economy or for policy development. Users identified that goods and services produced by a business are key characteristics of importance when classifying a business to an industry classification, along with the type of customer a business sells to and how a business produces its output. Other topics of interest were innovation and environmental impact.

Stakeholders were asked to give feedback on the suitability of ISIC as an alternative to ANZSIC. Respondents felt that while ISIC is likely to meet Australia's classification requirements at a higher level, it doesn't meet more detailed industry classification requirements and that ISIC would need to be expanded to suit Australia's classificatory needs. Feedback identified that ISIC focuses heavily on the international economy, with a broad range of industries grouped together and in some circumstances does not have enough detail to reflect Australian industrial activity.

We received comprehensive feedback on issues associated with ANZSIC 2006 and what stakeholders would like to see included in a future industrial classification. There was widespread acknowledgement from respondents that ANZSIC 2006 hasn't kept pace with Australia's changing industry structure over the last 15 years and improvements need to be made to the classification. Feedback recommended improvements to classification structure and industry coverage. It also highlighted that users have a diverse range of topics that they would like the industry classification to cover.

Also, feedback was received on issues not directly related to the industry classification, rather information on different business characteristics that users would find valuable and how this information could be linked to industry information to better meet policy objectives.

Feedback indicated that the benefit of having an updated classification outweighed the initial barriers to implementing a new classification, however, the ABS acknowledges that implementation concerns raised by some respondents will require further exploration and consultation. We also recognise that not all users' requirements may be met with an updated classification and that alternate views of that classification may be required.

We did

Based on the feedback provided, the ABS is considering the choice between updating ANZSIC and adopting a localised version of ISIC. A localised version of ISIC could share the structure at a high level, but have further lower level detail to better meet Australian needs.

The ABS needs to do further work to understand the development and implementation costs for the ABS and other stakeholders of an updated industrial classification.

The new ISIC rev 5 structure was endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission in their March 2023 meeting. Work is underway to produce the explanatory information to support the revised international classification.

If you would like more information, please email standards@abs.gov.au with any questions on this consultation or for further information.

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